(b) and (c) Development and promotion of places of tourist interest/ spots is the responsibility of the State Governments/UT Administrations concerned. Department of Tourism, Govt. of India provides financial assistance for the identified tourism projects in consultation with them.

Department of Tourism, Government of India has decided that during the 10th Five Year Plan it will identify six travel circuits in the country on an annual basis and develop them. These circuits will be finalised and developed in close coordination and partnership with the State/UT Governments and the concerned Government of India Departments. In addition to this it is proposed to identify one major destination in each State/Union Territory for overall development each year including the State of Tamil Nadu. During the financial year 2002-2003, Mahabalipuram has been identified for Destination Development.

Cultural festival in Kurukshetra

733. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a cultural festival is likely to be organised in Kurukshetra in the month of December, 2002;

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard; and

(c) what other steps are being taken by Government to develop Kurukshetra as an international pilgrimage and tourist destination?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) Yes, Sir

(b) A total of about 1000 folk artists/staff members would be participating in the festival, which is to commence from 11th to 15th December, 2002.

(c) A series of steps are being taken to promote Kurukshetra as a cultural-cum-tourist destination by developing Jyotisar, Brahamsarovar, Tapovan Park and Sheikh Chehli Tomb along with Harshvardhan Park at Kurukshetra.